Weekly Wire
East Asia and Pacific
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Australia
Mathematics of Planet Earth (MPE) 2013
Australia's Chief Scientist, Professor Ian Chubb, launched the 2013 International Year of Mathematics of Planet Earth on 29 January. The year will highlight the importance of mathematics and statistics in addressing a wide range of global challenges and encourage public engagement with mathematics. Professor Chubb opened the proceedings by discussing the growing demand for mathematical and statistical skills in the Australian workforce. http://mathsofplanetearth.org.au/mpe-australia-launched/

Korea
Global Science and Education in the 21st Century
Professor David M. Hellman, Department of Biological Sciences, Korean Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST), writes in the *Journal of Happy Scientists and Engineers* about 1) the importance of English in the university curriculum, 2) recruitment of foreign faculty and students, and 3) the curriculum in science education.
http://www.kaist.edu/edu.html

Malaysia
Rubber-tree Genome Sequenced
A group of international scientists have sequenced the draft genome sequence of the rubber tree, the major commercial source of natural rubber. The team identified 13% of the almost 70,000 genes as unique, and believes this draft genome information will accelerate the development of high-yielding natural rubber plants.
http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2164/14/75/abstract

New Zealand
Unique Facility to Test Biodegradation and Composting
Scion, a New Zealand Crown Research Institute, has designed and built a unique-to-New Zealand test facility for measuring composting of newly developed biomaterials.
http://www.scionresearch.com/general/publications/scion-connections/2011-issues/past-issues-list/issue-5/unique-facility-to-test-biodegration-and-composting

Singapore
New MEMS sensor
The Institute of Microelectronics will collaborate with a Norwegian geophysical company to develop a high performance Micro-Electromechanical Systems (MEMS) based sensor for deep sea seismic exploration. The new MEMS sensor will acquire more precise data during seismic surveys.
http://www.a-star.edu.sg/Media/News/PressReleases/tabid/828/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/1772/Default.aspx